DEPARTMENT RECONNECT COMMITTEE MEETING September 18, 2015

The meeting of the Department Reconnect Committee was called to order by Gary Tanner, Chairman, on September 18, 2015 at 10:00 am in Ballroom I of the Causeway Bay Hotel in Lansing, Michigan. The following people were present:

MEMBERS:

Gary Tanner, Chairman, Ken Pierce, George Harvey, James

Maki, Lewis Mitchell. Sean Green absent.

Chairman Tanner offered an opening prayer and pledge of allegiance.

Minutes:

It was moved by Jack Helminski and supported by George Harvey to accept the minutes of the Reconnect meeting during annual convention as published on the Department website. Motion carried.

Old Business:

The committee needs to increase promotion and participation in the Jim Schutze State Reconnect Award.

Chairman Tanner discussed the need to encourage posts to reach out to local military units and families in their local communities and foster improved relationship and assistance options. Local organizations and businesses will often help out or hold events to support our programs if asked.

New Business:

Chairman Tanner distributed the committee rules of procedure to be reviewed by the committee and revised if necessary. This will continue via email & phone calls to clarify.

It was moved by Ken Pierce and supported by Jack Helminski to allocate \$1,000 from the committee budget to develop and purchase pop up display for yellow ribbon workshops and committee events. Motion carried.

Chairman Tanner expressed the need to rename this committee to something clearer and more relevant outside of the American Legion. The committee will submit and consider possible names. Chairman Tanner was invited to attend the yellow ribbon predeployment workshop in Troy August 9th. It was a great event and many families stopped by for information. Livonia little league football held a veterans appreciation event August 30th benefiting the Michigan Wounded & Returning Warrior program that will have raised over \$2,000 once all accounting has been completed. The ALR road captains held their annual poker run on September 12th naming the Michigan Wounded & Returning Warrior program as its beneficiary. Even with cool weather and a smaller than expected turn out, they raised \$2,041 for our program. Elmobility deployed to the Lapeer Armory on September 13th in support of the 464th quartermaster co. Their event was a great success! Jim Maki represented the Reconnect Committee at the UP State Fair and spoke to many interested veterans, the majority of which were female veterans. The Dearborn Police and Fire departments will be hosting another Guns & Hoses charity softball game on Saturday October 3rd 2015 in Dearborn. Last year's game raised \$9,000 and we are hoping to do even better this year. The Michigan Bowling Association has agreed to partner with the Michigan Wounded & Returning

Warrior program and collect donations during their annual State Tournament next year. This event draws 8,000 to 10,000 bowlers each year. Dave Weber, owner of Indian Motorcycles shop in Mt. Clemens along with WCSX Radio 94.7 in Detroit have agreed to build and raffle a custom Indian motorcycle honoring POW/MIA's & Michigan's own Digger O'Dell. This should be a great project and proceeds will go to the Michigan Wounded & Returning Warrior program. Tips for Troops at Post 459 in Grand Rapids rose over \$5,000 during 6 nights and was absolutely amazing. The Flint/Genesee Bowling Association is hosting the first annual Patriot Bowling Bash benefitting the Michigan Wounded & Returning Warrior program on October 17th in Flushing, MI.

Adjournment:

There being no further business to come before this committee, it was moved by Jack Helminski and supported by Jim Maki to adjourn. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted by

Gary Tanner, Reconnect Committee Chairman